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ABSTRACT

A semantic-differential model of communicator style was tested by collecting data from 108 superior-subordinate dyads at a medium-sized midwestern company. Communication style variables were measured with Norton's Communicator Style Measure (CSM), which was modified slightly to give both superiors' self-evaluations of communication styles and subordinates' perceptions of their superiors' communication styles. Additional measures were used to obtain data on subordinates' perceptions of role conflict and role ambiguity and subordinates' satisfaction with work, pay, promotions, supervision, and coworkers. A factor analysis indicated two major factors, the semantic differential dimensions of evaluation and dynamism. These dimensions, in turn, showed significant relationships with subordinates' role conflict and ambiguity and job satisfaction. There were also significant interactions between the communicator style dimensions in predicting role ambiguity and subordinate satisfaction with the supervisor. (FL)

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LEADER COMMUNICATION STYLE:
TOWARD THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MULTI-DIMENSIONAL MODEL

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Leader Communication Style:
Toward the Development of a Multi-Dimensional Model

An abundance of research exists concerning various theories of leadership (i.e. House and Mitchell, 1974; Fiedler, 1971; Vroom and Yetton, 1973; Tannenbaum and Schmidt, 1958). Consistent with the findings of the Ohio State Leadership Studies, dimensions of leadership are generally agreed to be those of consideration and initiating structure. Perhaps because much concern has been with the task behavior of leaders, references to leadership, supervisory, and or managerial "style" (i.e. Fiedler, 1967; Hersey and Blanchard, 1977; McGregor, 1960; Redding, 1972; Katz and Kahn, 1978) have emphasized message content, much of which is primarily related to task behavior in general, rather than the elements of style in a supervisor's behavior.

Recently, Jablin (1979) summarized much of this work in his review of superior-subordinate communication. In the review, Jablin organized the research into nine topical areas: (1) interaction patterns and related attitudes; (2) openness; (3) upward distortion; (4) upward influence; (5) semantic-information distance; (6) effective vs ineffective superiors; (7) personal characteristics; (8) feedback; and (9) systemic variables. Within this ontology of superior-subordinate communication, Jablin notes that "researchers have focused the majority of their attention on (a) the effects of power and status on superior-subordinate communication, (b) trust as a moderator of superior-subordinate communication, and (c) semantic-information distance as a source of misunderstanding in superior-subordinate communication (p. 1201)." The review points to a lack of work in one important dimension of superior-subordinate communication: the role of how a message is communicated in developing relationships between superiors and subordinates.

One can think of communication behavior as being composed of two basic dimensions: the subject or content of the message sent and the style in which the message is transmitted. While theorists in leadership have traditionally referred to "leadership styles," we would argue that such styles primarily

address the content of communication exchanges, and do not address, or only indirectly so, the communication style of the leader. Consider such common "styles" as consideration, initiating structure, LPC, and participation, and the leader behaviors of goal-setting and giving feedback. All the aforementioned "styles" mainly refer to the content, or substance, of what the leader communicates. For example, a considerate leader can be thought of as one whose communications with a subordinate emphasize the subordinates's welfare or feelings, while the messages emanating from a structuring leader primarily address task issues. From another perspective, Katz and Kahn (1966) provide a commonly cited taxonomy of leader-member communications. In their view such interactions are of five basic types: (a) job instructions; (b) job rationale; (c) organizational procedures and practices; (d) feedback about subordinate performance; and (e) indoctrination of goals (pp. 239-241). This classification is clearly one of communication content.

On the one hand, we would not deny the importance of the content of a leader's communication with subordinates. On the other hand, communication theorists are currently investigating aspects of communication style while attempting to build a holistic theory of interpersonal communication (Norton, 1978; Richmond and McCroskey, 1979). It would seem that our understanding of leadership could be improved if we adopted a more integrative approach, combining the communications content orientation of traditional leadership with the style orientation which communication theorists are advancing.

The Management Communication Style Model

Richmond and McCroskey (1979) recently advanced a model of Management Communication Style (MCS). The model flows directly from previous work by Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1958) and Sadler (1970), and is only concerned with the decision-making style of leaders, that is, the extent to which they involve subordinates in decisions. In this sense MCS is clearly a unidimensional construct addressing participative management, and has limited scope in terms of

the broader context of general communication style. The normative model of leadership decision-making advanced by Vroom and Yetton (1973), in fact, has already developed this perspective and has yielded a contingency model of leader participation. The participation dimension is also thoroughly incorporated into the path-goal theory of leadership (House, 1971), which is the current reigning contingency model in the leadership literature. In sum, the MCS construct adds no new perspective to the leadership literature, and is only tangentially related to the construct of communication style.

Richmond and McCroskey's (1979) empirical findings indicate that MCS (operationalized with a 1-item scale) is correlated with job satisfaction of public school teachers. This finding, of course, is not new, and has been reported numerous times in the leadership literature (e.g. Tosi, 1970, Vroom, 1960). In summary, MCS adds little to our understanding of either participative decision-making or communication style in general.

The Norton Communicator Style Model

While the MCS perspective is only remotely associated with communication style, the model recently advanced by Norton (1978) approaches the construct directly.

Norton defined communicator style as the "way one verbally and paraverbally interacts to signal how literal meaning should be taken, interpreted, filtered, or understood (p. 99)." Norton (1978) conceptualized communicator style in terms of ten subconstructs. Nine of these subconstructs are descriptive of one's style and include: dominant, dramatic, contentious, animated, impression leaving, relaxed, attentive, open, and friendly. Norton described the tenth subconstruct, communicator image, as a dependent variable, or an evaluative consequent of the first nine subconstructs. These ten style subconstructs were developed by Norton based on a review of communications and psychological theory and research, and focus on descriptions of communicative behaviors such as hand gestures, facial expressions, rhythm, voice tone, frequency and duration of eye contact, postures,

and so forth. In short, the subconstructs tap manifestations of the communication process, or style, independently of the message content. For a complete description of the subconstructs and for a review of research relating them to such variables as power, status, attraction, anxiety, self-image, and ambiguity tolerance, the reader is referred to Norton (1978).

Norton's model clearly comes nearer to describing general communicator style than does the MCS model. Upon closer inspection, however, several deficiencies in the Norton scheme are apparent. For one, the subscale reliabilities from the Communicator Style measure are not uniformly high (see Norton, 1978). Secondly, the subscales themselves are highly intercorrelated. These problems, moreover, seem to be symptomatic of a more basic problem with Norton's approach. The fundamental shortcoming in this model is the apparent lack of a theoretical basis for the dimensionality of communicator style. There would seem to be no theoretical justification for assuming that communicator style is aptly described in terms of nine or ten dimensions. Moreover, the theoretical rationale for choosing the specific subconstructs posited by Norton is also not apparent. In terms of construct validity, no nomological network is specified for communicator style, nor is there any evidence pertaining to convergent or discriminant validity. In short, Norton's communicator style measure appears to be an interesting collection of items in search of a model.

A Semantic Space Approach to Communicator Style

As noted above, conceptions of communicator style, particularly in the leadership context, have generally lacked a well-developed theoretical rationale. It is our intent in this paper to present such a rationale and to begin to explore it empirically. At this point our perspective is that of subordinates perceiving their supervisor's communicator style. From this perspective, then, one can pose the question: in what ways do people perceive another's communicator style? In other words, what are the primary dimensions of communicator style?

As stated, these questions can be viewed as particular instances or a more

general phenomenon--that is, the way in which people perceive social objects in general. This phenomenon, in turn, addresses the issue of how individuals assign meaning to their observations. It seems, then, that the question of the dimensionality of communicator style can be viewed as a question of the measurement of meaning. Fortunately, there is a well developed theory concerning the measurement of meaning. This theory, of course, is the semantic differential model of Osgood, Suci, and Tannenbaum (1957).

Briefly, semantic differential theory posits that people perceive and describe concepts in three basic dimensions: evaluative, activity, and potency. These dimensions describe the underlying structure of one's cognitive process for assessing objects (concrete and abstract) in the environment. The semantic differential scales were developed as a means to operationalize this process. As Osgood et al. (1957) note: "The position checked on the scales constitute the coordinates of the concept's location in semantic space, (and) we assume that the coordinates in the measurement space are functionally equivalent with the components of the representational mediation process associated with this concept. This, then, is one rationale by which the semantic differential, as a technique of measurement, can be considered as an index of meaning (p. 30)." Since a subordinate's perception of a supervisor's communicator style involves a relational-mediational process, the semantic differential approach may well be a useful perspective from which to view communicator style.

From a scaling perspective, the semantic differential model implies that subordinates would cluster the various communication behaviors of a supervisor into the evaluative, activity, and potency dimensions. This would also imply that a good way to operationalize communicator style would be with the semantic differential scales. However, there would be one major shortcoming to this approach. While use of the semantic differential scales might allow us to dimensionalize subordinate perceptions of supervisors, and thus to locate particular supervisors in semantic space, it would tell us nothing about the clustering of specific communication behaviors, and how those behaviors were

related to the evaluative, activity, and potency dimensions.

It would seem that an optimal way to operiationalize a semantic differential model of communicator style would be to assess a wide range of subordinate perceptions of leader communication behaviors and to determine whether these communication perceptions factored into evaluative, activity, and potency dimensions. For this purpose Norton's 51-item communicator style measure would seem to be useful, for the items do represent a rather broad sampling of communicative behaviors. Thus for the present study, we have chosen Norton's instrument as an initial means by which to explore the plausibility of a semantic differential approach to communicator style.

Research Questions

The primary objective of this paper is to begin to develop a theoretical model for the construct of communicator style. In so doing we propose to apply the semantic differential model to subordinate perceptions of their leader's communication behaviors. The first research question to be addressed, then, is:

Q 1: Do subordinates view communication behaviors of their superiors in evaluative, activity, and potency dimensions?

If, indeed, the semantic differential model adequately describes how subordinates assign meaning to their perceptions of their leader's communication behavior, we can then proceed to examine the nomological network of these style dimensions. That is, what are the antecedents of communication style, and what are the consequences of superior communication style variables on subordinate outcomes? In terms of antecedents, Norton (1978) has proposed that communicator styles are habitual patterns of responding. If this notion is correct, we might assume that individual characteristics of leaders, such as personality traits, would be the primary antecedents of communicator style. On the other hand, one's communicator style may not be an enduring and stable characteristic, but instead

by influenced by situational variables. In the organizational context, such situational factors might include the nature of the task on which the group is working, the legitimate power base of the leader, the size of the subordinate group, or subordinate characteristics such as education or skill level, to name a few. While these issues are of interest in themselves, it perhaps would be premature to explore antecedents until we have some evidence that communicator style has significant consequences in terms of subordinate responses. Thus, the present paper begins to examine the relationships among leader communicator styles and subordinate outcomes.

The subordinate outcomes we have chosen to explore are ones that have a high degree of significance to organizations and their members. The first set concerns role perceptions of subordinates, specifically, role conflict and ambiguity. Role conflict refers to the state in which a subordinate receives conflicting, or inconsistent, role demands from one or more superiors. Role ambiguity refers to a situation in which the role demands of a subordinate are ambiguous or unclear. Since the ground-breaking studies of Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, and Rosenthal (1964), both role conflict and ambiguity have been found to lead to employee stress, anxiety, absenteeism, and turnover. Role conflict and ambiguity, in turn, are both outcomes which would seem to be intimately linked to the communication style of leaders, insofar as leaders play a large part in communicating role expectations to subordinates. Thus, we pose our second research question:

> Q 2: Are the evaluative, activity, and potency dimensions of leaders' communicator style significantly related to subordinate role conflict and role ambiguity?

Finally, the present paper examines the multi-dimensional construct of job satisfaction. Clearly, job satisfaction is an important outcome in any organizational setting. While one cannot argue that job satisfaciton is a direct

antecedent of job performance, there is considerable empirical evidence indicating the role of satisfaction in employee absenteeism and turnover (e.g. Locke, 1976). Furthermore, job satisfaction is multi-dimensional in that evaluations of different aspects of a job can vary within employees. Thus, we separately examine the job facet satisfactions for supervision, pay, work, promotions, and coworkers (Smith, Kendall, and Hulin, 1969). Again, it seems plausible to suspect that the communicator style of a leader can play a significant role in affecting these responses. Hence, our third research question:

Q 3: Are the evaluative, activity, and potency dimensions of leaders' communication style significantly related to subordinate satisfaction with supervision, pay, work, promotions, and co-workers?

In this initial study we examine these question in the context of the superior-subordinate dyad in a private sector organizational setting.

Method

Subjects

The sample consisted of 108 superior-subordinate dyads from a medium-sized midwestern utility company. Ninety-two per cent of the sample was male and represented seven differnet departments spanning five levels in the organization hierarchy. Job levels ranged from laborer to vice-president. Participants' ages ranged from 19 to 61 while tenure in the organization ranged from nine months to thirty-five years. All respondents voluntarily participated in the study.

Measures

Communication Style. Communication style variables were measured with Norton's (1978) Communicator Style Measure (CSM). The CSM is clustered into nine subscales measuring the following dimensions of communicator style: dominant (DOM), dramatic (DRAM), contentious (CONT), animated (ANIM), impression leaving (IMPR), relaxed (RELX), attentive (ATTN), open (OPEN), and friendly (FRND). Each of these subscales is composed of five items followed by seven-point response scales ranging from "very strong disagreement" to "very strong agreement." A tenth subscale assessed overall communicator image (IMAGE) which Norton (1978) postulated as an evaluative consequent of the first nine subscales. The IMAGE scale is composed of six items each with the same response format as the first nine subscales. Questions from each of the subscales were randomly ordered throughout the measure. The following are sample items from each of the ten subscales: "In most social situationa I generally speak very frequently" (DOM), "Often I physically and vocally act out what I want to communicate" (DRAM), "In arguments I insist upon very precise definitions" (CONT), "I tend to constantly gesture when I communicate (ANIM), "The way I say something usually leaves an impression on people" (IMPR), "The rhythm or flow of my speech is affected by my nervousness" (RELX), "I deliberately react in such a way that people know that I am listening to them" (ATTN), "As a rule, I openly express my feelings or emotions" (OPEN), "I always prefer to be tactul" (FRND), "The way I communicate influences my life both positively and dramatically" (IMAGE). A complete copy of the CSM can be obtained by writing the present authors or by referring to Norton (1978).

In the present study two versions of the CSM were employed. First, each supervisor completed the original Norton CSM with him or herself as the focus. Secondly, subordinates completed a reworded version of the CSM with their

supervisor as the focal person. For subordinate use, scale items were appropriately re-written. For example, the original DOM item, "In most social situations I generally speak very frequently," was reworded to read, "In most social situations my supervisor generally speaks very frequently." In both cases supervisors were the objects of the scales, which included both forward and reverse scored items. Throughout this study the abbreviations DOM, DRAM, etc., refer to subordinate perceptions of supervisors while the abbreviations DOMS, DRAMS, etc., refer to supervisory self-perceptions. Again, it should be stressed that we are not employing the CSM for its original purpose as intended by Norton. Rather, we feel that the 51 items of the CSM represent a reasonably broad sampling of communicator style variables which might be useful in operationalizing a semantic differential model of communicator style.

Employee responses. Measures for subordinate perceptions of role conflict and role ambiguity were obtained from the instrument by Rizzo, House, and Lirtzman (1970). The Job Description Index (Smith, Kendall, & Hulin, 1969) was used to measure subordinate satisfaction with work, pay, promotions, supervision, and coworkers.

Procedure

Respondents were administered the measures in small groups of three to ten people. Each session was supervised by one of the authors over a two week period. Meetings were held in private conference rooms and lasted approximately forty-five minutes during working hours. In order to match supervisor and subordinate scores for data analysis, each respondent was asked to give his or her employee identification number on the questionnaire. However, each respondent was assured of total confidentiality by employing the following procedures. First, in order to protect the identity of respondents with regard to their supervisors and other members of the organization, all questionnaires

were given directly to the researchers and were never shown to any member of the organization. Secondly, the organization supplied to the researchers a full organizational chart detailing all supervisor-subordinate pairings by identification number. This procedure allowed the cross-tabulation of data and prevented the researchers from knowing the identity of the individual respondents. Instructions to the study participants included a full briefing of these procedures.

Results

Factor Analysis of CSM Items

To explore the dimensionality of leader communicator style, a factor analysis with varimax rotation was computed on subordinate perceptions of the CSM items. The results of this analysis are listed in Table 1. The

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Insert Table 1 about here

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analysis produced a 14-factor solution, however the first two factors accounted for 48% of the variance. Since each of the remaining factors each accounted for little of the remaining variance, only the first two are examined. The first factor accounted for 31% of the common variance (eigenvalue = 9.68) and had 17 items with factor loadings greater than .40. An examination of these items indicates that they are primarily of an evaluative nature (e.g. friendly, tactful, calm, open, attentive, honest, encouraging, etc.). Two of the items ("The rhythm or flow of my supervisor's speech is affected by his/her nervousness," and "My supervisor is very argumentative.") loaded negatively onto factor one. In all, there would seem to be justification for labelling the first factor as "evaluative."

For the second factor, 11 items loaded with weights greater than .40 (all positive). This factor accounted for 17% of the total variance and had an eigenvalue of 5.41. These items do not seem to represent either

activity or potency alone, but rather represent a combination of these two dimensions. For example, items such as "actively uses facial expressions," "is very expressive nonverbally," "tends to gesture constantly," "very frequently verbally exaggerates," and "dramatizes a lot," clearly describe an activity dimension of communicator style. Similarly, items such as "tends to come on strong," "has a tendency to dominate informal conversations," "is very argumentative," and "is dominant in social situations," clearly are indicative of a potency dimension. These two dimensions are about equally represented in the second factor. Our initial expectations were to find each of these dimensions represented by a separate factor. However, a re-examination of Osgood et. al.'s (1957) original work suggests an explanation for the mixing of these two dimensions. Osgood et. al. found that in every instance in which a widely varied sample of concepts was used the same three factors emerged in roughly the same order of magnitude. An evaluative factor generally appeared first and accounted for the most amount of variance, followed by potency and activity. However, they note further that:

> When the sample of things being judged is restricted in some fashion, the nature and order of magnitude of the factors may change. For example, when judgments are limited to sociopolitical concepts (people and policies), there seems to be a coalescence of the second and third factors in what might be called a "dynamism factor" (pp. 73-74).

In this light, the present findings are quite consistent with the many semantic differential studies reported by Osgood et. al. (1957). In fact, subjects in this study were asked to restrict their judgments (specifically, to their supervisor), thus we might have expected the factor analytic results to suggest an "evaluative" and a "dynamism" factor. In addressing our first research question, these results seem to indicate that the semantic differential model accounts for the dimensionality of communicator style fairly well. While these findings are clearly exploratory, they strongly suggest further examination; thus we are tempted to offer a tentative "yes" to question one.

Communicator Style and Role Perceptions

In order to examine the second research question, scale scores for the evaluative and dynamism dimensions were computed from those CSM items which loaded (greater than .40) on those factors. Given the low sample size relative to the number of items in the factor analysis, one would expect a fair amount of factor weight instability across samples. Thus, rather than compute factor scores, the factor loadings were used as a basis for choosing items with which to compute unit-weighted summative scales for evaluation and dynamism. A respondent's score for the evaluative dimension, then, was the average of his or her responses to the 17 items loading on factor one. The two items with negative loadings on this factor were reverse scored. Similarly, the dynamism scale was computed with the 11 items loading on factor two. Estimates of internal consistency reliability (coefficient alpha) were .92 for the evaluative scale and .87 for the dynamism scale. These reliabilities and descriptive statistics for the other study variables are reported in Table 2.

Insert Table 2 about here

The zero-order correlations among the communicator style dimensions and subordinate response variables are listed in Table 3. The evaluative dimension is significantly correlated with subordinate role conflict ($r = -.53$, $p < .001$) and with role ambiguity ($r = -.48$, $p < .001$). Thus styles high on the evaluative dimension are strongly associated with lower levels of subordinate role conflict and ambiguity. The dynamism dimension is also significantly correlated with both role conflict ($r = .18$, $p < .05$) and role ambiguity ($r = .19$, $p < .05$). While of a smaller magnitude than the evaluative dimensions, dynamism is associated with higher levels of conflict and ambiguity.

Insert Table 3 about here

Multiple regression analyses were also computed to test the joint effects of the evaluative and dynamism dimensions, and their interaction, on conflict and ambiguity. An interaction term was computed as the product of the evaluative and dynamism scores and entered last in a hierarchical regression, following the procedures of Cohen and Cohen (1975). For role ambiguity, the joint main effects of the two communicator style variables accounted for 24% of the variance ($R = .49$, $F(2,105) = 16.74$, $p < .001$). The regression coefficients for both evaluation and dynamism were significant, and both were negative, indicating a net suppression effect for evaluation or dynamism (Cohen & Cohen, 1975). However, the interaction between evaluation and dynamism was also significant ($F(1,104) = 7.97$, $p < .01$), and accounted for an additional 5.4% of the role ambiguity variance. In order to illustrate the interaction, Figure 1 displays the effects of dynamism on ambiguity at a low level of evaluation (one standard deviation below the sample mean) and at a high level of evaluation (one standard deviation above the mean). As illustrated, dynamism has a positive slope under a high level of evaluation, but has almost no relationship with role ambiguity when accompanied by a low level of evaluation.

In the role conflict regression, the combined main effects of evaluation and dynamism accounted for 28% of the variance ($R = .53$, $F(2,105) = 20.52$, $p < .001$), but only the evaluative dimension had a significant regression weight and it was negative. There was no significant interaction effect between the communicator style variables on role conflict.

Overall, the evaluative dimension of communicator style is strongly and negatively associated with both role conflict and ambiguity. When controlling for evaluation, dynamism has no significant effect on role conflict, and its positive relationship with role ambiguity is evident only under conditions of high evaluation. Thus research question two also seems to warrant an affirmative response, with evaluation clearly being the dominant dimension of communicator style.

Insert Figure 1 about here

Communicator Style and Job Satisfaction

The zero-order correlations among the communicator style variables and the job satisfaction variables are listed in Table 3. As can be seen, the evaluative dimension is significantly correlated with all facets of job satisfaction, and especially so with supervision and work satisfaction. On the other hand, the dynamism dimension is significantly correlated only with supervision ($r = -.22$).

As with role conflict and ambiguity, the joint main and interactive effects of the communicator style variables on the five facets of job satisfaction were assessed with hierarchical multiple regressions. These regressions are summarized in Table 4. In each case, evaluation was found to have a significant main effect on work satisfaction. However, the two dimensions of communicator style had the greatest effect, by far, on satisfaction with supervision, accounting for more than half the total variance. In addition, the two style dimensions showed a significant interaction effect. An examination of this interaction reveals an interesting pattern of relationships, for the interaction is disordinal, indicating that the effects of dynamism on satisfaction with supervision are in the opposite directions at low and high levels

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Insert Table 4 about here

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of evaluation. As with the role ambiguity interaction, Figure 2 illustrates the differential effects of dynamism on supervisory satisfaction at levels of evaluation one standard deviation above and below the sample mean. At low levels of evaluation, increasing levels of dynamism are associated with decreases in satisfaction with the leader. However, at high levels of evaluation, dynamism is positively associated with satisfaction. In sum, not only the

magnitude, but the direction, of the effect of dynamism on satisfaction with supervision is contingent upon the level of the evaluative dimension. Leaders most likely to have satisfied subordinates are those who are high on both the evaluative and dynamism dimensions of communicator style.

Insert Figure 2 about here

Discussion

In this paper our primary purpose is to explore the feasibility of developing a semantic differential model of communicator style. First, to assess whether a semantic differential approach describes the dimensionality of subordinates' perceptions of their leader's communication style, we factor analyzed the Norton measure. Secondly, we examined the relationships between dimensions of style and the subordinate outcomes of role conflict and ambiguity and facets of job satisfaction. Overall, the results would seem to encourage the further development of the semantic differential model. Below we discuss each of the findings in turn.

The interpretation of a factor analysis is always somewhat subjective, and the findings of the present analysis certainly need replication. However, the labels "evaluative" and "dynamism" appear to be reasonably appropriate for the two main factors in this case. Given the fact that the communicator style items were not designed expressly for this purpose and that the factor structure appears so similar to what the semantic differential model would predict, we feel that the findings rather strongly suggest the potential of the model for describing the dimensionality of the communicator style construct. The primary advantage to this approach, moreover, is that it builds upon a well-developed and much researched theory for the measurement of meaning. In this respect it seems more

useful than the unidimensional approach of MCS, and also provides a more parsimonious multidimensional structure for communicator style than does Norton's model. In addition, two further steps would enhance the development of the semantic differential model. First, the range of communication behaviors sampled should be broadened. For example, it would appear useful to have items addressing aspects of communicator style such as the speed at which one talks, the amount of time spent communicating, the relative amounts of direct (e.g. face-to-face) as opposed to indirect (e.g. memos) communication, and the extent to which one initiates communication episodes rather than respond to others' initiations. This expanded set of items should then be factor analyzed on a larger sample than that employed in the present study. Secondly, the interpretation of factor analytic results in terms of the semantic differential factors can be approached empirically by use of the multitrait-multimethod matrix (Campbell and Fiske, 1959). Such a study would proceed in the following way: a) administer the expanded set of communicator style items to a sample of subordinates, b) also administer the set of standard bipolar semantic differential adjective items with the supervisor as the referent, and c) factor analyze each set of items separately. The communicator style factors which appear to be evaluative and dynamism dimensions could be used in the multitrait-multimethod matrix analysis with the evaluative and dynamism factors from the semantic differential scales. In this way the convergent and discriminant validity of the communicator style factors can be addressed directly, and thus provide a more objective empirical rationale for the labelling of factors.

Encouraged by the results of the factor analysis, we began to explore the relationships among the communicator style dimensions and subordinate outcomes. Both style dimensions were significantly related to employee

perceptions of role ambiguity. However, the joint effects of evaluation and dynamism are not additive, as was indicated by the interaction effect. High levels of evaluation are associated with lower levels of role ambiguity. Dynamism, on the other hand, tends to positively covary with ambiguity, but this effect is clearly contingent on the level of the evaluative dimension. The higher the level of evaluation the more that increases in dynamism are associated with increases in ambiguity. At low levels of evaluation, moreover, dynamism seems to have a slight tendency to decrease role ambiguity. The communicative behaviors of high evaluative leaders appear to be critical ones for reducing role ambiguity. However, when these behaviors are present to a high degree, the addition of dynamism behaviors may be counterproductive. In the relative absence of evaluative behaviors, though, the dynamism behaviors may provide some means, though not highly effective, for reducing role ambiguity. In any event, these preliminary findings suggest that the relationship of communicator style to employee responses is not a simple one. In the case of role conflict, however, the evaluative dimension of style is clearly the more important one, with high levels of evaluation being associated with low levels of conflict.

The evaluative dimension is also the more important for job satisfaction, being a significant predictor of all facets of satisfaction. However, its strongest relationship is with supervisory satisfaction. This relationship is also the most interesting because it illustrates again the non-additive effects of the evaluative and dynamism dimensions of communicator style. A highly dynamic style seems to lead to lower levels of satisfaction with the leader when in the presence of a low level of evaluative behaviors. We might conclude that subordinates find dynamic communication behaviors aversive when unaccompanied by high evaluative behaviors. On the other hand, activity and potency behaviors seem to actually enhance

satisfaction with the leader when he or she also exhibits high evaluative behaviors (e.g. listening, attentive, friendly, etc.). In terms of communication style, those leaders able to exhibit high levels of both dimensions appear to have the most satisfied subordinates.

In summary, the semantic differential model appears to hold the promise of providing a much needed theoretical basis for building a multidimensional model of communication style. Further, communication style variables derived from this model show strong relationships with important subordinate responses. These relationships, moreover, are not simple in that the effects of the communicator style variables are clearly not additive. The findings of the present study would seem to argue in favor of the further development and exploration of this model.

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Table 1

Factor Analysis of Communication Style Measure

(Items with Loadings greater than .40)

Item Description		1 Evaluative	2 Dynamism
3.	always prefers to be tactful	.56	-.12
6.	actively uses facial expressions	.05	.43
7.	tends to come on strong	-.27	.46
8.	is an extremely friendly communicator	.70	.10
9.	has a tendency to dominate informal communications	-.24	.59
12.	is very calm and collected when he talks	.68	-.18
15.	is always able to repeat back what has been said	.60	-.10
16.	comes across as a relaxed speaker	.74	.01
17.	rhythm or flow is affected by nervousness	.60	-.23
19.	tends to be very encouraging	.72	-.17
21.	is very expressive nonverbally	-.10	.44
23.	always shows that he/she is very understanding	.68	-.05
24.	tends to gesture constantly	-.03	.60
25.	is an extremely open communicator	.62	.13
27.	is an extremely attentive communicator	.69	.00
28.	very frequently verbally exaggerates	-.21	.54
29.	really seems to listen very carefully	.68	-.16
32.	regularly tells jokes, anecdotes, and stories	.17	.44
34.	people generally know my supervisor's emotional state	-.19	.42
38.	would rather be open and honest	.56	.00
39.	dramatizes a lot	-.15	.58
41.	is very argumentative	-.54	.52
44.	is dominant in social situations	-.21	.58
47.	is a very good communicator	.72	.12
48.	finds it very easy to communicate one-on-one	.66	.27
49.	in a small group of strangers is a very good communicator	.69	.28
50.	finds it very easy to maintain a conversation	.55	.23
	Eigenvalue	9.68	5.41
	% common variance	31	17

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables

	Mean	S.D.	Reliability
Evaluative dimension	5.00	1.08	.92
Dynamism dimension	3.68	.86	.87
Role Conflict	3.61	1.15	.75
Role Ambiguity	2.79	1.05	.73
Satisfaction:			
Pay	5.01	2.13	.82
Work	12.03	3.01	.86
Promotion	3.48	2.80	.81
Coworkers	14.03	3.45	.79
Supervision	13.89	4.13	.85

N = 108

Table 3

Correlations among Study Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Evaluation	-	-.21	-.53	-.48	.26	.45	.29	.28	.73
2. Dynamism	-	-	.18	.19	-.09	.12	.05	-.05	-.22
3. Conflict	-	-	-	.34	-.35	-.30	-.37	-.38	-.43
4. Ambiguity	-	-	-	-	-.20	-.38	-.27	-.27	-.41
5. Pay	-	-	-	-	-	.29	.50	.21	.32
6. Work	-	-	-	-	-	-	.35	.36	.40
7. Promotions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.30	.30
8. Coworkers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.35
9. Supervision	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 4

Summary of Job Satisfaction Regressions

	Satisfaction Variables				
	Pay	Work	Promotions	Coworkers	Supervisors
	B	B	B	B	B
Evaluation	.21*	.18**	1.02**	-1.22**	-.79**
Dynamism	-.46	-.74*	.64	-2.62	-4.78
Evaluation X Dynamism	.08	.31	-.06	.54	.91**
R^2	.07	.26	.09	.08	.58

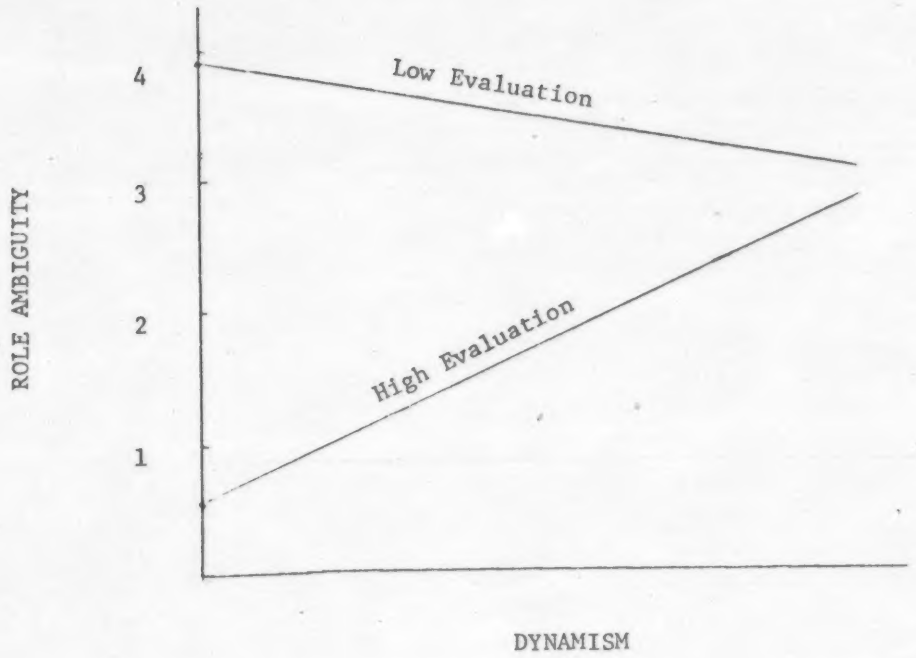
* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

Figure 1

Interaction between Evaluation and Dynamism

on Role Ambiguity



Regression Equations

LOW EVALUATION (EVAL = 3.92):

$$\hat{AMBIG} = -.17\ (DYNAMISM) + 3.92$$

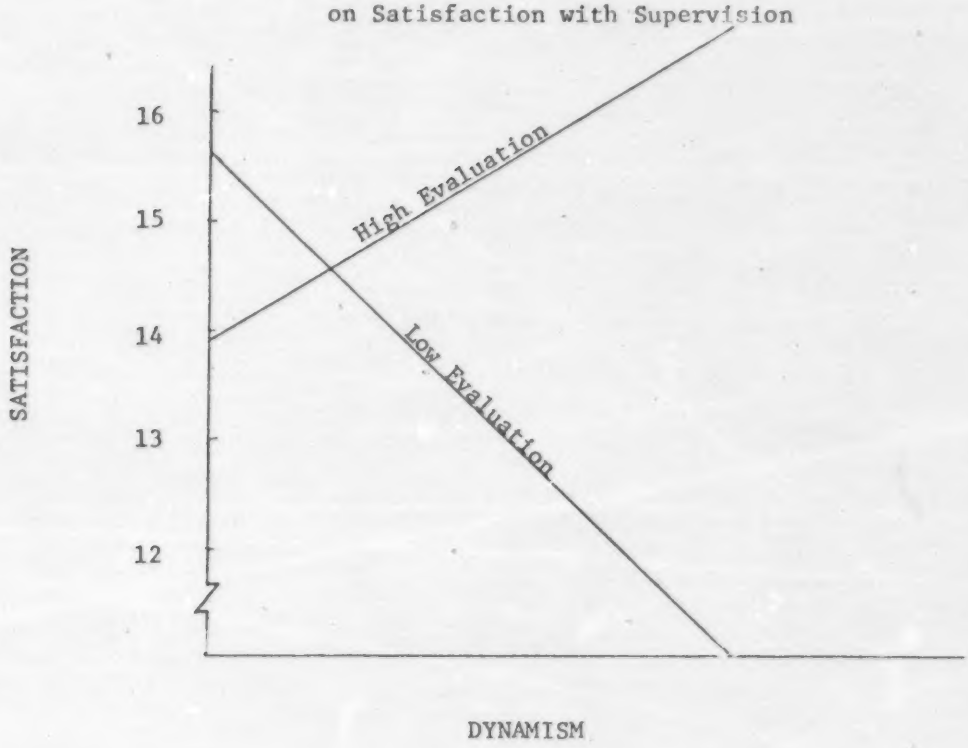
HIGH EVALUATION (EVAL = 6.08):

$$\hat{AMBIG} = .43\ (DYNAMISM) + .58$$

Figure 2

Interaction between Evaluation and Dynamism

on Satisfaction with Supervision



Regression Equation

LOW EVALUATION (EVAL = 3.92):

$$\hat{SATIS} = -1.21 \text{ (DYNAMISM)} + 15.69$$

HIGH EVALUATION (EVAL = 6.08):

$$\hat{SATIS} = .75 \text{ (DYNAMISM)} + 13.99$$